

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 CU-02 AID-05 L-03
PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
DODE-00 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 NSCE-00 INRE-00
ABF-01 PA-01 PRS-01 /078 W
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O R 041545Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5104
INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 2175

STATE FOR TODMAN AND DUFFEY

USIA FOR ILA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SCUL
SUBJECT: CULTURAL INITIATIVES

REFERENCE: STATE 096982

1. GOJ MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION ARNOLD BERTRAM HAS PUBLICLY INDICATED AN INTENTION TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES AS HE CAN TO PREVENT THE "INTRUSION" OF FOREIGN (READ: IMPERIALIST) CULTURE INTO JAMAICA. HE CONTENTS (AND IS SUPPORTED BY A VIGOROUS MINORITY WITHIN THE RULING PARTY AND A MAJORITY OF LOCAL "INTELLECTUALS") THAT JAMAICA'S CURRENT PARLOUS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITION IS LARGELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL HANG-OVERS FROM SLAVERY, COLONIALISM, CONSUMERISM, EXTRAVAGANT EXPECTATIONS, AND THE LIKE. THE LACK OF POPULAR WILL TO ACHIEVE "SELF-RELIANCE", THE RETENTION OF ECONOMIC POWER BY AN EXPLOITATIVE ELITE; AND THE CONTINUING "INFERIORITY" COMPLEX OF JAMAICANS -- ALL
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ARE THE RESULT OF THE TENDENCY OF JAMAICANS TO JUDGE THEMSELVES BY THE STANDARDS OF AN ALIEN CULTURE WHICH TAKES NO ACCOUNT EITHER OF THEIR REAL "ROOTS" OR ASPIRATIONS.

2. TO THIS END, NONE TOO SUBTLE PRESSURES HAVE ALREADY BEEN EXERTED TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF RADIO

AIR TIME TO INDIGENOUS MUSIC (READ: "RAGGAE") AT THE EXPENSE OF MUSIC IN THE CLASSICAL OR POPULAR TRADITION. ALSO, THERE IS AN INCREASING RELIANCE UPON LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMMING (INTERMINABLE TALK SHOWS, AMATEURISH THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS, QUIZ SHOWS ET. AL.) ON JBC-TV WITH A DECREASING EMPHASIS ON FOREIGN-PRODUCED (MOSTLY U.S.) COMMERCIAL TELEVISION SERIES.

3. WHETHER OR NOT ONE DISPUTES THESE VIEWS, THE FACT THAT THEY ARE WIDELY, AND INFLUENTIALLY, HELD HAS A DIRECT AND DEMONSTRABLE EFFECT ON THE PROSPECTS OF EXPANDING US-JAMAICAN CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, AT LEAST AS NORMALLY CONCEIVED. WE PRESENTLY ASSESS THOSE PROSPECTS AS MODEST.

4. AN ADDITIONAL PROBLEM IS PRESENTED BY JAMAICA'S CATASTROPHIC FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION WHICH HAS (UNINTENTIONALLY) AFFECTED OUR IV PROGRAM SERIOUSLY. JAMAICANS ARE PRESENTLY LIMITED TO A YEARLY TRAVEL ALLOWANCE OF US\$55. ANY GRANTEE WHO DOES NOT HAVE FUNDS ALREADY AVAILABLE IN THE U.S. (ITSELF A VIOLATION OF JAMAICAN LAW) WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT OUR GRANTS SINCE TRAVEL, PER DIEM, AND \$55 WILL NOT USUALLY COVER THE ACTUAL EXPENSES OF A 30-DAY TRIP. IN EFFECT, THIS GIVES THE GOJ A VIRTUAL VETO OVER OUR CHOICE OF RECIPIENTS -- THROUGH GRANTING OR WITHHOLDING ACCESS TO SUFFICIENT FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO

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COVER EXPENSES -- EVEN IF GRANTEE HAS ADEQUATE FUNDS OF HIS OWN AND IS WILLING AND ABLE TO EXPEND THEM. SOME KIND OF SPECIAL ALLOWANCE WILL NEED TO BE PROVIDED IN ORDER TO AVOID THIS UNDESIRABLE SITUATION -- PARTICULARLY TO GRANTEES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR OR THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. (AN UNPLESANT SITUATION IN THIS REGARD HAS ALREADY OCCURRED.) THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE SITUATION ALSO INVOLVES PERFORMING GROUPS WHEN THEIR TRAVEL OR OTHER COSTS MUST BE RAISED BY LOCAL CO-SPONSORS AND ULTIMATE EXPENDITURE CONSTITUTES A DRAIN ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES. WE HAD A RECENT DEMONSTRATION WHEN A DIRECT INTERCESSION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER (BY THE HEAD OF THE JAMAICAN NATIONAL DANCE THEATER WHO IS ALSO A POLITICAL ADVISOR TO THE PM) WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO SCHEDULE A PERFORMANCE OF THE PAUL TAYLOR DANCE GROUP IN SEPTEMBER, WHICH WILL COST THE LOCAL CO-SPONSORS US \$1500 IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE.

5. WE NEED, ESSENTIALLY, TWO KINDS OF APPROACH: THE

SPECTACULAR AND THE CONTINGENT. IN THE FIRST CATEGORY ARE VISITS BY THE ALVIN AILEY DANCE GROUP OR ONE OF SIMILAR STATURE; A RESPECTABLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA; A PROMINENT JAZZ BAND; A THEATER TOURING GROUP OF THE CALIBER OF THE GUTHRIE IN MINNEAPOLIS' A WEEK-LONG SEMINAR ON HIS NOVELS BY NOBEL PRIZE WINNER SAUL BELLOW OR A SIMILAR SEMINAR ON HIS ROOTS BY ALEX HALEY. SOMETHING THAT WILL SHOW THE JAMAICANS THAT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KINGSTON 2175

STATE FOR TODMAN AND DUFFEY

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THEY ARE REALLY IMPORTANT TO US. THE HITCH IS THAT, EXCEPT FOR THE COSTS OF LOCAL ORGANIZATION AND PUBLICITY, THESE ENTERPRISES ARE BEYOND OUR MODEST MEANS AND WOULD NEED TO BE FULLY FUNDED BY WASHINGTON.(OUR MOST RECENT COMPETITION IN THE SPECTACULAR FIELD WAS A WEEK-LONG VISIT BY ALICIA ALONZO AND THE CUBAN NATIONAL BALLET -- WHO PERFORMED IN OUTLYING PARISHES AS WELL AS IN KINGSTON. SO EXTENSIVE WAS THE SUPPORT OF THE OFFICIAL AGENCY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION FOR THE CUBAN BALLET THAT IT APPEARED THE GOJ WAS CO-SPONSORING THE EVENT. PERHAPS THE CUBANS HAVE A LOWER PER DIEM AND DO THEIR THING WITH COUNTERPART FUNDS.)

6. THE CONTINGENT CATEGORY: A SUM EARMARKED TO CAPITALIZE ON SITUATIONS OF OPPORTUNITY -- AS THEY

PRESENT THEMSELVES IN A CONTEXT IN WHICH THEY WOULD
BE CLEARLY USEFUL FOR THE U.S. WHILE RAISING NO UN-
NECESSARY HACKLES WITH THE GOJ. A MINI-SPECTACULAR,
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PERHAPS INVOLVING A SINGLE, NOTABLE, SPEAKER OR
PERFORMER. THIS CONTINGENT FUND COULD BE RELEASED
IF NOTHING USEFUL HAD APPEARED AT THE END OF THE 3RD
QUARTER OF THE FY. THE AMOUNT NEED NOT BE UNDULY
LARGE, BUT WE MUST HAVE THAT DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY
IN ITS USE WHICH WILL PERMIT US TO ACT QUICKLY.

7. OUR INTENTION, AND RECOMMENDATION, FOR THE FORE-
SEEABLE FUTURE IS TO DEFINE "CULTURE" WITH RESPECT
TO JAMAICA RATHER MORE NARROWLY THAN IN THE PAST.
IN JAMAICA'S CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS WHICH, IN
THEIR OPINION AND OURS, THREATENS THE STABILITY OF
THE SOCIETY, THOSE INPUTS, CULTURAL AND OTHERWISE,
WHICH SIGNAL OUR WILLINGNESS TO COUNTENANCE THE
SUCCESS OF THEIR "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST" EXPERIMENT
-- WHETHER OR NOT WE APPROVE OF IT -- WILL BE WEL-
COME. CONVERSELY, ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE THEM OF THE
ERROR OF THEIR WAYS WILL NOT.

8. WE ARE, THEREFORE, PLANNING TO ORIENT OUR REQUESTS
FOR SPEAKERS, VISITING SPECIALISTS, AND EXHIBITS-
DEMONSTRATIONS MORE HEAVILY TO THE TECHNICAL, ECONOMIC,
DEVELOPMENT FIELDS THAN IS CUSTOMARY IN CU PROGRAMS.
IN EFFECT TEMPORARILY CONVERTING TO A MINI-AID PRO-
GRAM WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENTAL
TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.

9. WE THINK THE GREATEST IMPACT COULD BE ACHIEVED
IF WE COULD BRING TO JAMAICA TECHNICAL EXPERTS FOR
RATHER LONGER THAN AN ORDINARY AMSPEC STAY -- BUT
MUCH LESS, AND LESS FORMALLY, THAN AN ACADEMIC
YEAR. (A KIND OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING.) THIS WOULD
ALSO HELP MEET THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROBLEM CITED IN
PARA 4. WE HAVE, IN FACT, ALREADY RECEIVED A FORMAL
REQUEST TO BRING LECTURER-TEACHERS PROFICIENT IN THE
TECHNIQUES OF TELEVISION PRODUCTION (SET DESIGN AND
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OTHER TECHNICAL ASPECTS) FOR A SHORT COURSE AT THE
JBC. TO THOSE WHO REGULARLY WATCH JBC-TV THIS HAS A
HUMANITARIAN APPEAL AS WELL. THE WARM WELCOME

RECENTLY ACCORDED OUR SPONSORSHIP OF EXPERTS IN THE ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY, ENERGY, AND FISHERIES FIELDS IS SUPPORTIVE OF THIS VIEW.

10. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT MUCH OF WHAT WE PROPOSE MIGHT, IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, MORE PROPERLY BE THE PROVIDE OF AID, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SPIN-OFF OF THIS APPROACH COULD BE OF IMMEDIATE IMPORTANCE. ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS THE NATURE OF OUR HELP ITSELF IS THE OPEN AND PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE IT. THE VISIBILITY OF SUCH PROJECTS -- AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MOUNTING THEM WITHOUT LENGTHY "FEASIBILITY STUDIES" IS NO SMALL PART OF THEIR PROBABLE VIABILITY.

11. IN ANTICIPATION OF REFTTEL, WE HAVE BEEN FORMULATING OUR FY 78 CU PROPOSAL ALONG THESE LINES. WITHOUT ANY UNKNOWLEDGE OF BUDGETARY LIMITATIONS, IT WILL CALL FOR A RATHER EXPANDED IV PROGRAM DEVOLVING MORE HEAVILY ON NEW GOVERNMENT MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES, AND LESS ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THAN HAS BEEN OUR WONT IN THE PAST. THIS FOR THE REASON THAT -- DUE TO THEIR ORIENTATION (AND OURS) -- THEY HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY UNTOUCHED BY OUR FORMAL CULTURAL PROGRAMS. THEIR RECEPTIVITY REMAINS TO BE DISCOVERED.

12. COMMENT: THE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS OF THE RULING PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE PUBLICLY TAKEN THEIR LUMPS AS PRIME MINISTER MANLEY, CONFRONTED BY THE HARD FACTS OF ECONOMIC REALITY, HAS BACKED AWAY IN APRIL FROM THEIR JANUARY POSITION OF "GOING IT ALONE". SINCE THE RADICALS ARE SMARTING

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UNDER THEIR SETBACK, THE POSSIBILITY OF PERIPHERAL SNIPING AT "CULTURAL IMPERIALISM"--WHILE AVOIDING DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH THE MODERATES IN AREAS WHERE THEY ARE DOOMED TO FAILURE -- CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPROACH IS TO HOLD THOSE POSSIBILITIES TO A SUSTAINABLE MINIMUM. THE OPPOSITION, AND MUCH OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WILL LIKELY SEE IT AS A BETRAYAL. BUT A JAMAICA IN CHAOS WILL BENEFIT NO ONE. JUST AS WE OPPOSE "DEEPENING THE REVOLUTION", WE OPPOSE DEEPENING THE THERMIDOR.
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